

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/036,345

Examiner

Michael I Poe

Applicant(s)

WARDELL, MICHAEL JAMES

Art Unit

1732

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the amendment filed on January 26, 2004.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 4-10 (renumbered 1-7, respectively).
3. ☐ The drawings filed on _____ are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 6. ☒ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☒ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date 20040319.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☒ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date 20040319.
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

Authorization

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with the applicant Michael Wardell on March 20, 2004.

Amendments

2. The application has been amended as follows:

The title has been changed to:

-- A METHOD OF FORMING A CONCRETE RETAINING WALL BLOCK IN A FRONT FACE UP POSITION --.

The abstract has been replaced with the abstract on the attached separate page.

The specification has been amended as follows:

Page 1, 1 st paragraph,	"Cross Reference to Related Applications: None" has been deleted;
Page 1, 2 nd paragraph,	"Copyright Statement: Not applicable" has been deleted;
Page 1, 3 rd paragraph,	"Federal Research Statement: Not applicable" has been deleted;
Page 1, 4 th paragraph,	"Appendix Data: Not applicable" has been deleted;
Page 1, 5 th paragraph, line 3,	"(Block Machines or Paver" has been deleted after "machines" and -- (e.g., block machines or paver" has been inserted after "machines";

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Page 1, 5 th paragraph, line 4,	-- i.e., -- has been inserted before "Siamese";
Page 1, 5 th paragraph, line 15,	--, -- has been inserted after "unit";
Page 2, 1 st paragraph, line 1,	"manor" has been deleted after "same" and -- manner -- has been inserted after "same";
Page 2, 1 st paragraph, line 2,	--, -- has been inserted after "wall" and --, -- has been inserted after "point";
Page 2, 1 st paragraph, line 3,	--, -- has been inserted after "machine";
Page 2, 1 st paragraph, line 4,	"products or any concrete masonry unit" has been deleted before "the";
Page 2, 1 st paragraph, line 6,	-- e.g., -- has been inserted before "variance";
Page 2, 1 st paragraph, line 7,	--, -- has been inserted after "up";
Page 2, 1 st paragraph, line 9,	"Retaining Wall" has been deleted after "of" and -- retaining wall - has been inserted after "of";
Page 2, 1 st paragraph, line 10,	--, -- has been inserted after "units";
Page 2, 2 nd paragraph, line 9,	--, -- has been inserted after "layers";
Page 2, 2 nd paragraph, line 12,	"Retaining Wall" has been deleted after "of the" and -- retaining wall -- has been inserted after "of the";
Page 3, 1 st paragraph, line 4,	--, -- has been inserted after "way";

The 2nd paragraph on page 3 has been replaced by the following:

-- Brief Description of the Drawings:

Figure 1 is a top view of different configurations of retaining wall units used to lay up a wall;

Figure 2 is a side view of a sample wall showing how retaining wall units are placed together;

Figure 3a is a top view of the mold showing how the horizontal cores are arranged;

Figure 3b is an end view of retaining wall units; and

Figure 4 is a side view of a sample wall showing a stone face impressed into the face of the wall. --

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Page 3, 3 rd paragraph,	"Brief Description of Sequences: Not applicable" has been deleted;
Page 4, 1 st paragraph, line 5,	"," has been deleted after "machines" and -- (-- has been inserted after "machines";
Page 4, 1 st paragraph, line 5,	"," has been deleted after "machines" and -- and -- has been inserted after "machines";
Page 4, 1 st paragraph, line 6,	--) -- has been inserted after "machines";
Page 4, 1 st paragraph, line 9,	"; the" has been deleted after "mold" and --. The -- has been inserted after "mold";
Page 4, 1 st paragraph, line 13,	"," this" has been deleted after "products" and --. This-- has been inserted after "products";
Page 4, 1 st paragraph, line 15,	"," has been deleted after "area", --;-- has been inserted after "area", and --,-- has been inserted after "however";
Page 4, 1 st paragraph, line 16,	-- aggregates (e.g., -- has been inserted before "sand";
Page 4, 1 st paragraph, line 17,	--), -- has been inserted after "etc." and "what ever is available" has been deleted after "etc.";
Page 4, 1 st paragraph, lines 17-18,	"mix the combinations into" has been deleted after "to" and -- prepare -- has been inserted after "to";
Page 4, 2 nd paragraph,	--;-- has been inserted after "machine";
Page 4, 3 rd paragraph, line 1,	--, -- has been inserted after "wood";
Page 4, 3 rd paragraph, line 2,	--;-- has been inserted after "mold";
Page 4, 4 th paragraph, line 2	--;-- has been inserted after "mold";
Page 4, 5 th paragraph, line 2,	--;-- has been inserted after "mold";
Page 5, 1 st paragraph, line 1,	-- containing shoes -- has been inserted after "head", and ", comes down containing shoes," has been deleted after "head";
Page 5, 1 st paragraph, line 3,	--;-- has been inserted after "mold";

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Page 5, 2nd paragraph, line 1, -- (e.g., the product is still uncured but solid enough to stay together in its molded shape), -- has been inserted after "reached";

Page 5, 2nd paragraph, line 3, --;-- has been inserted after "mold";

Page 5, 3rd paragraph, lines 1-2, "This product is still uncured but solid enough to stay together in it's molded shape." has been deleted before "The product";

Page 5, 3rd paragraph, line 4, --; and -- has been inserted after "handled";

Page 5, 4th paragraph, line 1, --, -- has been inserted after "handled";

Page 5, 4th paragraph, line 3, --.-- has been inserted after "again";

Page 5, 6th paragraph, line 2, --, -- has been inserted after "from the mold";

Page 5, 6th paragraph, line 6, --, -- has been inserted after "And";

Page 6, 1st paragraph, line 1, --, -- has been inserted after "way";

Page 6, 1st paragraph, line 2, "manor" has been deleted after "this" and -- manner -- has been inserted after "this"; and

The paragraph starting at page 6, 2nd paragraph and ending at page 7, 1st paragraph has been replaced by the following:

-- My design incorporates the use of a horizontal core puller in conjunction with a concrete products machine to put a chamfer 4 on the ends of the block 5 and a dovetail slot 3 on the back or pallet side of the block 5. A horizontal core puller is a piece of equipment that attaches to the front, side or back of the concrete products machine and utilizes fingers or tines 2, that are inserted into a mold 1, to make a slot, groove or hole (e.g., a dovetail slot 3 or a chamfer 4) in the back face 7 of the block 5 being manufactured. These fingers or tines 2 are inserted mechanically through holes 8 in the side of the mold 1 at the bottom of the mold 1 before the concrete mix is put into the mold 1. They stay in position until the block 5 is finished molding and then are pulled backwards from the mold 1 prior to stripping the block 5 from the mold 1. The use of the core puller allows the block 5 to be manufactured at any height desired. Retaining wall blocks 5 need to be at least six inches deep, from front face 6 to back face 7, to be of any

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use. This design allows for the manufacture of blocks 5 from six to twelve inches deep from front face 6 to back face 7. Numerous designs can be impressed into the front face 6 of the retaining wall blocks 5 by pressing a head containing at least one shoe against the top surface of the concrete mix in the mold 5. Retaining wall blocks have to be easily made and capable of being laid in a radius to be of any significant value. The known processes do not allow for the front face to be impressed into a block. The known processes also depend on the precision of the machine to make a block at a consistent height. With my design, the height of the block 5 is determined by the precision of the mold 1, which is manufactured to high tolerances. The blocks 5 can be made fast and economically using my process. Retaining wall blocks 5 are dry stacked to form walls as opposed to using mortar between the joints. The tolerances have to be very close for the heights of the blocks 5 to form a wall. My design allows for these closer tolerances. --

The claims have been amended as follows:

Claim 3 has been canceled.

The following new claims have been added:

4. (New) A method of forming a concrete retaining wall block having a front face and an opposed back face in a front face up position comprising:

- providing a mold having at least one hole for receiving at least one associated tine of a horizontal core puller;

- inserting the at least one tine in the associated at least one hole;

- positioning a feedbox containing a semi-dry concrete mix over the mold;

- feeding the concrete mix from the feedbox into the mold;

- pressing and vibrating the concrete mix in the mold with a head comprising at least one shoe to form a concrete retaining wall block;

- allowing the concrete retaining wall block to set within the mold until the concrete retaining wall block is solid enough to stay together;

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removing the at least one tine from the mold by pulling the at least one tine backwards from the mold;

stripping the concrete retaining wall block from the mold; and

allowing the concrete retaining wall block to cure;

wherein the improvement comprises:

inserting the at least one tine into the associated at least one hole wherein the at least one hole is located at a bottom of the mold and wherein the at least one tine is positioned to form at least one slot in the back face of the concrete retaining wall block;

providing a head comprising at least one shoe for stamping a relief in the front face of the concrete retaining wall block; and

pressing and vibrating the concrete mix in the mold with the head by inserting the head into a top of the mold to form a concrete retaining wall block in the front face up position such that the front face of the concrete retaining wall block is stamped with the relief by pressing the at least one shoe of the head against a top surface of the concrete mix and the at least one slot is formed in the back face of the concrete retaining wall block.

5. (New) The method of forming a concrete retaining wall block according to claim 4 further comprising:

positioning a pallet made of metal or wood under and tight against the bottom of the mold prior to inserting the at least one tine in the associated at least one hole in the bottom of the mold.

6. (New) The method of forming a concrete retaining wall block according to claim 4 wherein the dimensions of the concrete retaining wall block are exact and consistent from cycle to cycle of the method.

7. (New) The method of forming a concrete retaining wall block according to claim 4 wherein the at least one slot is selected from the group consisting of dovetail slot, chamfer and combinations thereof.

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8. (New) The method of forming a concrete retaining wall block according to claim 7 wherein the at least one slot comprises a dovetail slot.

9. (New) The method of forming a concrete retaining wall block according to claim 7 wherein the at least one slot comprises a plurality of slots.

10. (New) The method of forming a concrete retaining wall block according to claim 9 wherein the plurality of slots comprises a dovetail slot and chamfer.

Drawing Changes

3. The following changes to the drawings have been approved by the examiner and agreed upon by applicant:

- 1) the descriptive text will be eliminated from all drawings;
- 2) the following elements will be labeled in the drawings: mold 1, fingers or tines 2, dovetail slot 3, chamfer 4, block 5, front face 6, back face 7 and holes 8;
- 3) "Page 1" will be relabeled "Figure 1" on the drawing sheet labeled "Page 1";
- 4) "Page 2" will be relabeled "Figure 2" on the drawing sheet labeled "Page 2";
- 5) "Page 3" will be deleted on the drawing sheet labeled "Page 3";
- 6) the top view on the drawing sheet labeled "Page 3" will be presented as "Figure 3a";
- 7) the end view on the drawing sheet labeled "Page 3" will be presented as "Figure 3b"; and
- 8) "Page 4" will be relabeled "Figure 4" on the drawing sheet labeled "Page 4".

In order to avoid abandonment of the application, applicant must make these above agreed upon drawing changes.

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Examiner's Statement(s) of Reasons for Allowance

4. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

- (1) The prior art of record does not teach or suggest the claimed method of forming a concrete retaining wall block having a front face and an opposed back face in a front face up position, as a whole, especially including inserting at least one tine of a horizontal core puller into at least one hole in the bottom of a mold such that the at least one tine is positioned to form at least one slot in the back face of the concrete retaining wall block and pressing and vibrating the concrete mix in the mold with a head comprising at least one shoe to form a concrete retaining wall block in a front face up position such that the front face of concrete retaining wall block is stamped with a relief by pressing the at least one shoe of the head against a top surface of the concrete mix and simultaneously the at least one slot is formed in the back face of the concrete retaining wall block. Although it is known in the art to use horizontal core bars to form features (such as slots) of concrete blocks (see, for example, U.S. Patent No. 5,484,236 to Gravier or U.S. Patent No. 2,614,310 to James or U.S. Patent No. 3,587,143 to Sonnevile) and it is known in the art to stamp the surface of concrete blocks to form patterns therein (see, for example, U.S. Patent No. 5,082,438 to Rook et al. or U.S. Patent No. 5,320,790 to Lowe), there is no teaching or suggest in the prior art that concrete blocks could be made in a front face up position while simultaneously forming a relief on the front face of the block and at least one slot in the back face of the block.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

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Conclusion

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael I Poe whose telephone number is (571) 272-1207. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael Colaianni can be reached on (571) 272-1196. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Michael Poe/mip


MICHAEL COLAIANNI
PRIMARY EXAMINER

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method of forming a concrete retaining wall block having a front face and an opposed back face in a front fact up position. The method includes inserting a plurality of tines of a horizontal core puller into a plurality of holes in the bottom of a mold such that the a plurality of tines are positioned to form a dovetail slot and chamfers in the back face of a concrete retaining wall block; and pressing and vibrating a semi-dry concrete mix feed into the mold with a head to form a concrete retaining wall block having a relief stamped in its front face and to form the dovetail slot and chamfers its back face. The method allows the dimensions of the concrete retaining wall block to be exact and consistent from cycle to cycle of the method.

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The title would be changed to -- A METHOD OF FORMING A CONCRETE RETAINING WALL BLOCK IN A FRONT FACE UP POSITION --.

The abstract would be replaced with the abstract on the attached separate page.

The specification would be amended as follows:

- | | |
|---|---|
| page 1, 1 st paragraph, | "Cross Reference to Related Applications: None" would be deleted; |
| page 1, 2 nd paragraph, | "Copyright Statement: Not applicable" would be deleted; |
| page 1, 3 rd paragraph, | "Federal Research Statement: Not applicable" would be deleted; |
| page 1, 4 th paragraph, | "Appendix Data: Not applicable" would be deleted; |
| page 1, 5 th paragraph, line 3, | "(Block Machines or Paver" would be deleted after "machines" and -- (e.g., block machines or paver" would be inserted after "machines"; |
| page 1, 5 th paragraph, line 4, | -- i.e., -- would be inserted before "Siamese"; |
| page 1, 5 th paragraph, line 15, | --, -- would be inserted after "unit"; |
| page 2, 1 st paragraph, line 1, | "manor" would be deleted after "same" and -- manner -- would be inserted after "same"; |

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page 2, 1st paragraph, line 2, --, -- would be inserted after "wall" and --, -- would be inserted after "point";

page 2, 1st paragraph, line 3, --, -- would be inserted after "machine";

page 2, 1st paragraph, line 4, "products or any concrete masonry unit" would be deleted before "the";

page 2, 1st paragraph, line 6, -- e.g., -- would be inserted before "variance";

page 2, 1st paragraph, line 7, --, -- would be inserted after "up";

page 2, 1st paragraph, line 9, "Retaining Wall" would be deleted after "of" and -- retaining wall -
- would be inserted after "of";

page 2, 1st paragraph, line 10, --, -- would be inserted after "units";

page 2, 2nd paragraph, line 9, --, -- would be inserted after "layers";

page 2, 2nd paragraph, line 12, "Retaining Wall" would be deleted after "of the" and -- retaining
wall -- would be inserted after "of the";

page 3, 1st paragraph, line 4, --, -- would be inserted after "way";

the 2nd paragraph on page 3 would be replaced by the following:

-- Brief Description of the Drawings:

Figure 1 is a top view of different configurations of retaining wall units used to lay up a wall;

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Figure 2 is a side view of a sample wall showing how retaining wall units are placed together;

Figure 3a is a top view of the mold showing how the horizontal cores are arranged;

Figure 3b is an end view of retaining wall units; and

Figure 4 is a side view of a sample wall showing a stone face impressed into the face of the wall. --

page 3, 3rd paragraph, "Brief Description of Sequences: Not applicable" would be deleted;

page 4, 1st paragraph, line 5, ", " would be deleted after "machines" and -- (-- would be inserted after "machines";

page 4, 1st paragraph, line 5, ", " would be deleted after "machines" and -- and -- would be inserted after "machines";

page 4, 1st paragraph, line 6, --) -- would be inserted after "machines";

page 4, 1st paragraph, line 9, "; the" would be deleted after "mold" and --. The -- would be inserted after "mold";

page 4, 1st paragraph, line 13, ", this" would be deleted after "products" and --. This-- would be inserted after "products";

page 4, 1st paragraph, line 15, ", " would be deleted after "area", --;-- would be inserted after "area", and --,-- would be inserted after "however";

page 4, 1st paragraph, line 16, -- aggregates (e.g., -- would be inserted before "sand";

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page 4, 1 st paragraph, line 17,	--), -- would be inserted after "etc." and "what ever is available" would be deleted after "etc.";
page 4, 1 st paragraph, lines 17-18,	"mix the combinations into" would be deleted after "to" and -- prepare -- would be inserted after "to";
page 4, 2 nd paragraph,	--;-- would be inserted after "machine";
page 4, 3 rd paragraph, line 1,	--, -- would be inserted after "wood";
page 4, 3 rd paragraph, line 2,	--;-- would be inserted after "mold";
page 4, 4 th paragraph, line 2	--;-- would be inserted after "mold";
page 4, 5 th paragraph, line 2,	--;-- would be inserted after "mold";
page 5, 1 st paragraph, line 1,	-- containing shoes -- would be inserted after "head", and "comes down containing shoes," would be deleted after "head";
page 5, 1 st paragraph, line 3,	--;-- would be inserted after "mold";
page 5, 2 nd paragraph, line 1,	-- (e.g., the product is still uncured but solid enough to stay together in its molded shape), -- would be inserted after "reached";
page 5, 2 nd paragraph, line 3,	--;-- would be inserted after "mold";

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page 5, 3rd paragraph, lines 1-2, "This product is still uncured but solid enough to stay together in it's molded shape." would be deleted before "The product";

page 5, 3rd paragraph, line 4, --; and -- would be inserted after "handled";

page 5, 4th paragraph, line 1, --, -- would be inserted after "handled";

page 5, 4th paragraph, line 3, --.-- would be inserted after "again";

page 5, 6th paragraph, line 2, --, -- would be inserted after "from the mold";

page 5, 6th paragraph, line 6, --, -- would be inserted after "And";

page 6, 1st paragraph, line 1, --, -- would be inserted after "way";

page 6, 1st paragraph, line 2, "manor" would be deleted after "this" and -- manner -- would be inserted after "this"; and

the paragraph starting at page 6, 2nd paragraph and ending at page 7, 1st paragraph would be replaced by the following:

-- My design incorporates the use of a horizontal core puller in conjunction with a concrete products machine to put a chamfer 4 on the ends of the block 5 and a dovetail slot 3 on the back or pallet side of the block 5. A horizontal core puller is a piece of equipment that attaches to the front, side or back of the concrete products machine and utilizes fingers or tines 2, that are inserted into a mold 1, to make a slot, groove or hole (e.g., a dovetail slot 3 or a chamfer 4) in the back face 7 of the block 5 being manufactured. These fingers or tines 2 are inserted mechanically through holes 8 in the side of the mold 1 at the bottom of the mold 1 before the concrete mix is put into the mold 1. They stay in position until the

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block 5 is finished molding and then are pulled backwards from the mold 1 prior to stripping the block 5 from the mold 1. The use of the core puller allows the block 5 to be manufactured at any height desired. Retaining wall blocks 5 need to be at least six inches deep, from front face 6 to back face 7, to be of any use. This design allows for the manufacture of blocks 5 from six to twelve inches deep from front face 6 to back face 7. Numerous designs can be impressed into the front face 6 of the retaining wall blocks 5 by pressing a head containing at least one shoe against the top surface of the concrete mix in the mold 5. Retaining wall blocks have to be easily made and capable of being laid in a radius to be of any significant value. The known processes do not allow for the front face to be impressed into a block. The known processes also depend on the precision of the machine to make a block at a consistent height. With my design, the height of the block 5 is determined by the precision of the mold 1, which is manufactured to high tolerances. The blocks 5 can be made fast and economically using my process. Retaining wall blocks 5 are dry stacked to form walls as opposed to using mortar between the joints. The tolerances have to be very close for the heights of the blocks 5 to form a wall. My design allows for these closer tolerances. --

The following drawing changes would be agreed upon:

- 1) the descriptive text will be eliminated from all drawings;
- 2) the following elements will be labeled in the drawings: mold 1, fingers or tines 2, dovetail slot 3, chamfer 4, block 5, front face 6, back face 7 and holes 8;
- 3) "Page 1" will be relabeled "Figure 1" on the drawing sheet labeled "Page 1";
- 4) "Page 2" will be relabeled "Figure 2" on the drawing sheet labeled "Page 2";
- 5) "Page 3" will be deleted on the drawing sheet labeled "Page 3";
- 6) the top view on the drawing sheet labeled "Page 3" will be presented as "Figure 3a";
- 7) the end view on the drawing sheet labeled "Page 3" will be presented as "Figure 3b"; and
- 8) "Page 4" will be relabeled "Figure 4" on the drawing sheet labeled "Page 4".

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Claim 3 would be canceled.

The following new claims would be added:

4. (New) A method of forming a concrete retaining wall block having a front face and an opposed back face in a front face up position comprising:

- providing a mold having at least one hole for receiving at least one associated tine of a horizontal core puller;

- inserting the at least one tine in the associated at least one hole;

- positioning a feedbox containing a semi-dry concrete mix over the mold;

- feeding the concrete mix from the feedbox into the mold;

- pressing and vibrating the concrete mix in the mold with a head comprising at least one shoe to form a concrete retaining wall block;

- allowing the concrete retaining wall block to set within the mold until the concrete retaining wall block is solid enough to stay together;

- removing the at least one tine from the mold by pulling the at least one tine backwards from the mold;

- stripping the concrete retaining wall block from the mold; and

- allowing the concrete retaining wall block to cure;

- wherein the improvement comprises:

- inserting the at least one tine into the associated at least one hole wherein the at least one hole is located at a bottom of the mold and wherein the at least one tine is positioned to form at least one slot in the back face of the concrete retaining wall block;

- providing a head comprising at least one shoe for stamping a relief in the front face of the concrete retaining wall block; and

- pressing and vibrating the concrete mix in the mold with the head by inserting the head into a top of the mold to form a concrete retaining wall block in the front face up position such that the front face of

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the concrete retaining wall block is stamped with the relief by pressing the at least one shoe of the head against a top surface of the concrete mix and the at least one slot is formed in the back face of the concrete retaining wall block.

5. (New) The method of forming a concrete retaining wall block according to claim 4 further comprising:

positioning a pallet made of metal or wood under and tight against the bottom of the mold prior to inserting the at least one tine in the associated at least one hole in the bottom of the mold.

6. (New) The method of forming a concrete retaining wall block according to claim 4 wherein the dimensions of the concrete retaining wall block are exact and consistent from cycle to cycle of the method.

7. (New) The method of forming a concrete retaining wall block according to claim 4 wherein the at least one slot is selected from the group consisting of dovetail slot, chamfer and combinations thereof.

8. (New) The method of forming a concrete retaining wall block according to claim 7 wherein the at least one slot comprises a dovetail slot.

9. (New) The method of forming a concrete retaining wall block according to claim 7 wherein the at least one slot comprises a plurality of slots.

10. (New) The method of forming a concrete retaining wall block according to claim 9 wherein the plurality of slots comprises a dovetail slot and chamfer.

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A method of forming a concrete retaining wall block having a front face and an opposed back face in a front face up position. The method includes inserting a plurality of tines of a horizontal core puller into a plurality of holes in the bottom of a mold such that the a plurality of tines are positioned to form a dovetail slot and chamfers in the back face of a concrete retaining wall block; and pressing and vibrating a semi-dry concrete mix feed into the mold with a head to form a concrete retaining wall block having a relief stamped in its front face and to form the dovetail slot and chamfers its back face. The method allows the dimensions of the concrete retaining wall block to be exact and consistent from cycle to cycle of the method.